

CFS finds Salmonella in sample of prepackaged salad

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (August 8) that a sample of prepackaged roasted portobello mushroom and sweet potato vegan box was found to contain a pathogen, Salmonella. The CFS is following up on the case.

"The CFS collected the above-mentioned sample from a retail outlet in Mong Kok for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed the presence of Salmonella in 25 grams of the sample, exceeding the criterion of the Microbiological Guidelines for Food which states that Salmonella should not be detected in 25g of a ready-to-eat food sample," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS has informed the vendor and food factory concerned of the above irregularity and instructed them to stop selling the food item concerned immediately. The CFS has also inspected the food premises and the food factory concerned, provided health education on food safety and hygiene to the person-in-charge and staff, and requested the food factory to review and improve its food production process and carry out a thorough cleaning and disinfection.

According to section 54 of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132), all food available for sale in Hong Kong, locally produced or imported, should be fit for human consumption. An offender is subject to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

"Salmonella infection may cause fever and gastrointestinal upset such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhoea. The effects on infants, young children, the elderly and people with a weak immune system could be more severe and may even lead to death," the spokesman said.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action to safeguard food safety and public health. An investigation is ongoing.